

What is claimed is:

1. An operating device for an electrical device having a spherical operating element that is mounted to be rotational about at least one axis, wherein means (30, 35) are provided for influencing the torque needed to rotate the spherical operating element (10) about the at least one axis (101).
2. The operating device as recited in Claim 1, wherein the means for influencing the torque needed to rotate the spherical operating element are designed in the form of at least one plunger (30), which is pressed against the spherical operating element (10) with a predefinable force.
3. The operating device as recited in Claim 1, wherein the means for influencing the torque needed to rotate the spherical operating element are produced in the form of at least one actuator (60, 61), which, in response to a movement of the spherical operating element (10), generates a predefinable torque that counteracts the motion of the spherical operating element (10).
4. The operating device as recited in Claim 3, wherein the at least one actuator is produced in the form of an electromotor (60) having a corresponding activation (170), a roll (61), which is frictionally engaged with the spherical operating element, being situated on the electromotor's shaft.
5. The operating device as recited in one of the preceding claims, wherein increasing the torque needed to rotate the spherical operating element (10) renders it possible to block a rotation of the spherical operating element about at least one of the at least one rotational axis (101).

6. The operating device as recited in one of the preceding claims,  
wherein the spherical operating element (10) has a first partial element (11), which is able to be rotated about a first axis (13), and a second partial element (12), which is able to be rotated about a second axis (14), and the second axis (14) is essentially perpendicular to the first axis (13).

7. The operating device as recited in Claim 6,  
wherein the first partial element (11) is designed in the form of a sphere and the second partial element (12) as an at least approximate hemisphere that partially surrounds the first partial element (11).

8. The operating device as recited in one of the preceding claims for use as a pointer control,  
wherein it is provided for the torque needed to rotate the spherical operating element (10) to be influenced such that the torque is influenced as a function of the position of pointer in a context.

9. The operating device for use as a pointer control as recited in Claim 8,  
wherein the context is an at least one-dimensional selection list (menu) (200), and it is provided for the torque (205) needed to rotate the spherical operating element (10) to be influenced such that moving the pointer toward the edge of the menu causes the torque to increase.

10. The operating device for use as a pointer control as recited in Claim 8 or 9,  
wherein at least one of the at least one rotational degrees of freedom of the spherical operating element is able to be blocked as a function of the context, by

increasing the torque (205) needed to rotate the spherical operating element (10).

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